

The Beauty of the Color Black

There aren't too many colors out there that add as much sophisticated drama to a room as the color black. When I get started on a room, if the homeowners mention they are looking for drama, I know right where to start. A recent kitchen redecoration is a good example. As with any decorating project, we begin by finding an inspiration piece. In a kitchen, there are several places to find inspiration. It could be found in a wall covering or a border that has just the right colors and a theme you like. Another great place to look is at a tile store, for interesting and decorative tiles to use on the back splash.



We found our inspiration when we discovered a rather contemporary, geometric dinnerware pattern. It had the variety of colors we wanted to work with, including gold, olive and plum tones, but the real grabber was the outlines in, none other than...black. From this patterned dinnerware came the ideas for the wall technique, the window hardware, the furniture,

lighting and the accessories. In other words, finding the right inspiration piece helped us design the entire kitchen. Here's how it worked.

The colors on the dinnerware weren't solid. In fact, they were mottled and blotchy, almost like a washed or ragged painting technique would be. We decided to go with the gold tones for the walls, and we grabbed a rag and some gold glaze, and went to work. We painted the walls a light, yellow based off white as our base for the ragging technique. Once the satin finish paint was dry, we dipped a rag into the gold glaze, and created some nice folds in the rag, then went to the walls. By



pressing and rolling the glazed rag over the walls, we created a mottled pattern, not unlike the pattern in the dinnerware.



While Matt was finishing up the walls, I started thinking about the windows. I placed a simple white pleated shade in the side window for privacy from the next door neighbors which you can see in the photo above. But I hated to completely cover the front window, because the view outdoors added a sense of space and some additional light to the room. So, keeping the black outlines of the dinnerware in mind, I purchased a couple wrought iron drapery rods, and sewed a sheer, but very full curtain. I mounted one rod at the base of the large picture window, and one about two thirds of the way up. This allowed privacy lower on the window, but a view above. It also gave a nice bistro feel to the kitchen.

The next purchase was the furniture. The moment I saw the curly cues on these wrought iron chairs, I knew they were meant for this kitchen. The black was fabulous, and the wood top table was practical.



As the layering of the room continued, Matt was busy with the lighting. He had found a rather contemporary hanging pendant fixture that was suspended by three black bars and had a black wrought iron frame which held a beautiful frosted glass shade.

Those of you, who know us, know that hanging the pendant fixture was probably the toughest project in the room. Electricity doesn't like us, and we always recommend having someone with you who has done an electrical project like yours before. Just a little tip, because getting an electric shock – hurts. And as Matt would say, “Just thought you'd want to know!”

Once the above fixtures and furniture were in place, areas needing accessories start to pop out. For instance, we immediately felt that we needed an area rug under the kitchen table. Something with some pattern because so far, everything in the room was solid colored or just slightly mottled. The area rug was easy to select, taking the dinnerware pattern with us to the store.



We found one with many of the same colors as the dinnerware, and with black outlines around all the designs. Again, it was meant to be! This particular area rug was available in several sizes, so we made sure to get one large enough for the chairs to stay on the rug when they are pulled out from the table.



Choosing accessories for this room was a blast. We found a variety of wrought iron items like wall planters and fruit bowls that picked up the wrought iron of the furniture.

We added prints with grapes and fruit motifs, wrought iron towel hooks; even our mug tree was wood with wrought iron hooks!



For the table I made two separate runners, one wide one to go across the table in gold, and a long, narrow black one to cover the length of the table for on top. The layering of the two cloths created built in placemats that looked marvelous under our new inspirational dinnerware!

Use this same technique, of finding an inspiration piece and pulling your colors and theme out of it for any room in your home. You can see in this kitchen and in every room we decorate that the system is proven to work!

And, if you're looking for drama, remember to use black. We used it in everything from the kitchen countertops, to the lighting, fabrics and furniture. You can see that it is gorgeous in small amounts, and it can add just the right touches to make a good design...great!

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